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Impact of Part-Time Work on Academic Burnout and Academic Stress among Undergraduate University Students

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Abstract

The current study aims to examine the impact of part-time work on academic burnout and academic stress among undergraduate university students who are either engaged in part-time work or are not working. Although prior research has explored the psychological effects of part-time work, limited studies have directly compared working and non-working students, particularly in the Pakistani context. It is hypothesized that there will be a significant difference in the level of academic burnout and academic stress among part-time working students (jobians) and non-working students (non-jobians). Using convenience sampling, 300 undergraduate students (150 working and 150 non-working) were recruited from various universities. Data were collected both online and in person using a cross-sectional quantitative research design. Along with consent and demographic forms, the Academic Stress Scale Tool (ASST; Shafiq Zunaira) and the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory – Student Version (OLBI-S; Demerouti et al., 2003) were administered. Data were analyzed using SPSS, including descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test. The findings indicated no statistically significant difference in the level of academic burnout and academic stress between working and non-working students, suggesting that university students experience stress and burnout regardless of employment status. Limitations, future research directions, and practical implications for improving students' academic outcomes are also discussed.

Keywords: Part-Time Work, Academic Burnout, Academic Stress, Working Students, Undergraduate Students

Introduction

Work plays a significant part in our lives since it helps us earn money, become independent, and engage in social and professional activities. More than just a job, work carries broader social and personal meanings. Job meanings, on the other hand, are tied closely to what the individual gains personally (Andersson, 1992). According to Blustein (2006), work meets vital human needs including survival, connection with others, and self-direction. Similarly, Kalleberg (2009) described employment as a formal arrangement where people exchange their services for payment. Recently, there has been a notable rise in student participation in paid work because of higher education costs, financial stress, and a desire for independence. Earlier studies have shown that students do not merely work to finance their studies; they also do so to gain real-world experience and develop career skills (Curtis & Shani, 2002). Part-time employment is a common option among college students, defined as the receipt of payment for work performed

less than full-time while maintaining other responsibilities such as education (International Labour Organization, 1994). Studies have demonstrated multiple potential benefits of part-time employment, including financial assistance, independence, exposure to professional environments, and skill development. The extent to which students engage with their studies may be impacted positively or negatively by the balance between the benefits and demands of working (Creed et al., 2015). Evidence suggests that moderate to low levels of part-time work may allow students to perform academically, with performance determined by the student's workload and time management capabilities (Dundes & Marx, 2006). Conversely, managing multiple obligations concurrently may create role confusion and feelings of being overwhelmed, leading to psychological distress (Robotham, 2012). Part-time work may therefore interfere with academic performance, especially when students are unable to appropriately allocate their time between competing roles, resulting in increased academic stress. The psychological syndrome of burnout occurs in response to long-term exposure to chronic stress and difficult environments. Maslach et al. (2001) identified three main symptoms of burnout: exhaustion (loss of physical and emotional energy), cynicism (detachment or negativity towards work-related responsibilities), and inefficacy (reduced feelings of accomplishment and productivity). Burnout is recognized as a complex problem with the potential to significantly impact both individual psychological well-being and performance (Maslach et al., 2001). Although burnout was initially studied in work environments, researchers have also investigated it within education. Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined academic burnout as a syndrome characterized by exhaustion from studies, feelings of detachment or cynicism about studies, and feelings of academic inefficacy. In their cross-cultural study of university students from Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands, Schaufeli et al. found that academic burnout negatively impacts both academic engagement and performance. Since then, educational burnout has become a significant concern for students' psychological well-being, academic performance, and educational outcomes.

Academic burnout can occur when students find it difficult to manage part-time work alongside their studies. A typical employed student experiences contrasting expectations from both work and study, resulting in time pressure, fatigue, role confusion, and limited opportunities for rest and academic engagement. Prior studies suggest that students who work part time are more susceptible to feeling burned out and disconnected from the academic experience, especially when they work longer hours and face difficulties meeting academic obligations (Drăghici & Cazan, 2022; Galbraith & Merrill, 2015; Robotham, 2012). Stress can be defined as both a psychological and physiological reaction to when an individual perceives that demands exceed their available resources for coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). It is characterized by feelings of discomfort, tension, and strain, with a direct impact on performance, behavior, and overall well-being. Academic stress develops from the pressure of academic demands including, but not limited to, examinations, papers, deadlines, competition, and concerns about performance. University students are frequently subject to academic stress because of large course loads, time pressures, and high expectations for success. Academic stress can occur for students who have part-time jobs and find it difficult to balance job responsibilities with academic ones. Employed students often face conflicting demands from work and school, leading to time pressures, fatigue, role conflict, and limited opportunities for rest. Prior studies have demonstrated that students who work while studying frequently experience greater stress than those who study full time (Taylor & Owusu-Banahene, 2010; Abdullah & Dan Mohd, 2011).

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the level of academic stress among undergraduate university students.
2. To assess the level of academic burnout among undergraduate university students.

3. To examine the difference in academic stress between part-time working students and non-working students.
4. To examine the difference in academic burnout between part-time working students and non-working students.
5. To determine whether the number of working hours predicts academic stress and academic burnout among undergraduate students.

This study is significant as it broadens our understanding of how part-time work affects undergraduate students' levels of academic stress and burnout. Results from the study could help students navigate their responsibilities more effectively while also allowing educational institutions to better tailor their academic counseling and support services. Additionally, this research provides empirical data to support current literature, helping policymakers create strategies that assist working students in achieving academic success and improving overall mental health.

Rationale of the Study

Firstly, part-time work among university students has become increasingly common, yet its psychological effects in the Pakistani context remain underexplored. As more students engage in employment to meet financial needs, it becomes important to understand how this work may influence their academic and psychological functioning.

Secondly, part-time work may increase academic stress and academic burnout because students must balance employment and study responsibilities simultaneously. Managing both roles can create time pressure, fatigue, role conflict, and reduced rest, which may negatively affect well-being and academic performance.

Thirdly, there is limited local research comparing part-time working and non-working students in terms of academic stress and academic burnout. Most available studies focus on one variable at a time or are based on contexts outside Pakistan, so locally grounded evidence is needed.

Finally, the findings of this study may help universities, counselors, and policymakers develop better support systems for working students.

Literature Review

Part-time employment among university students refers to any paid work conducted in addition to full-time studies. The rising costs of living and financial burdens mean many undergraduate students seek employment while attending university. The dual role of being both a student and an employee places continuous demands on a student's time, energy, and emotional resources. Understanding the relationship between part-time employment and academic stress and burnout is therefore critical, particularly in settings with minimal institutional support or significant family pressure. Since the cost of higher education is increasing globally, many university students seek part-time work to pay for their education, cover living expenses, or gain career experience (Beerkens et al., 2011; Carney et al., 2005). The present study hypothesizes that there would be a significant difference in the level of academic stress and burnout between students who work part time and those who do not (non-jobians). The prevalence of part-time employment among university students is well documented. Beerkens et al. (2011) noted that student employment has become a hallmark of Estonian universities, while Robotham (2012) reported that in the UK many students are employed for 10 to 20 hours per week in addition to full-time studies, with universities yet to provide adequate support systems. Mounsey et al. (2013) reported that students who worked out of financial need encountered higher levels of stress, increased anxiety, and poorer academic outcomes than peers who worked voluntarily. These studies are largely based on Western contexts where students have better institutional support, whereas Pakistani students working out of financial necessity, with high reliance on family, likely carry a greater psychological burden. In Pakistan, academic failure carries

consequences for family honor and social standing, intensifying stress; the present study addresses this cultural context by directly comparing jobians and non-jobians on academic stress and burnout among Pakistani undergraduates. Dundes and Marx (2006) found that students employed part time (10 to 19 hours per week) achieved significantly better academic performance than those who did not work or who worked more than 19 hours, due to the development of self-discipline. However, these findings stem from a North American context where students could work around their academic schedules, something most Pakistani students cannot do. Butler (2007) found a significant negative relationship between job demands and school performance, suggesting that it is the work-school conflict, rather than work itself, that affects psychological well-being. Wenz and Yu (2010) further found that increased stress and decreased study time mediated the negative relationship between academic performance and hours worked. Carney et al. (2005) provided evidence that part-time work was statistically significantly harmful to students' mental and physical health. Zhang and Yang (2020) demonstrated that employment has a negative impact on performance, with the negative effect consistently reported after employees worked 10 to 25 hours per week. Academic stress is defined as an individual's perception that the total level of academic demands exceeds available coping resources, resulting in psychological distress, negative affect, and impaired functioning (Misra & McKean, 2000). Robotham (2009) found that students working more than 15 hours per week reported significantly higher stress compared to non-working peers, with role conflict identified as the primary contributing mechanism. Haruna et al. (2021) reported that financial stress and workload were two of the most substantial determinants of student psychological well-being. Academic burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced academic efficacy (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Alarcon et al. (2009) identified three psychological resilience factors that are self-efficacy, emotional stability, and hardiness. As coping mechanisms for burnout. Longitudinal research found that academic burnout negatively affects student performance among North American business students working while attending school Galbraith & Merrill, (2012, 2015). Research conducted among Indonesian working students found that economic hardship contributes to academic burnout, with gender serving as a moderator Maba, (2023). Liu et al. (2021) found that 59.9% of Chinese university students experienced burnout in academia. There is extensive literature indicating that academic stress serves as the precursor of burnout, supporting Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources theory. Yang (2004) and Shin et al. (2011) showed that unresolved academic stress subsequently leads to academic burnout over time. Safarzaie et al. (2017) determined that both academic stress and burnout have independent predictive capability relative to academic self-efficacy. Lin and Huang (2014) identified that multiple domains of academic stress independently predicted academic burnout, inferring that interventions targeting academic stress may prevent burnout. The research by Saqib et al. (2025) discovered a significant relationship between academic burnout, coping strategies, and goal adjustment among working and non-working Pakistani students; however, their study focused on goal adjustment rather than academic stress and burnout as parallel dependent variables. Overall, previous studies support the association between working part time and heightened academic stress and higher levels of academic burnout via role conflict, time constraints, and resource depletion. Results from studies completed in Scotland, the United Kingdom, the United States, Estonia, China, Indonesia, Nigeria, Malaysia, and Pakistan all agree that working students experience greater psychological strain than non-working students. However, there is no existing research that simultaneously compares jobians and non-jobians in terms of academic stress and academic burnout among a Pakistani undergraduate population. Pakistani undergraduate students face an unusually high level of combined pressures associated with financial necessity, strong collectivist family expectations, anxiety about academic failure, and minimal institutional support. The present study fills this gap by simultaneously measuring

both outcomes in 300 Pakistani university students, testing the hypothesis that there would be a significant difference in the levels of academic burnout and academic stress between jobians and non-jobians, and contributing locally grounded empirical evidence to an underrepresented area of research.

Hypothesis

H1: There would be a significant difference in the level of academic burnout and academic stress among part-time working students and non-working students.

Methodology

Research Design

Present study, a quantitative cross-sectional research design was used to investigate the impact of part-time work on academic burnout and academic stress among undergraduate university students. The independent variable (IV) was part-time work status (working and non-working students), whereas the dependent variables (DVs) were academic burnout and academic stress. Data were collected at a single point in time to examine group differences among the study variables.

Sampling Technique

In the current study, a convenience sampling technique (non-probability sampling method) was used due to the accessibility and ease of approaching undergraduate university students. Data were collected both in person and through online forms from students enrolled in different universities.

Participants

In the present study, 300 undergraduate university students were selected from different universities. Among these participants, 150 students were engaged in part-time employment (jobians), whereas 150 students were non-working (non-jobians). Both male and female students were included in the study. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 30 years.

Research Sites

The data were collected from different universities where undergraduate students were enrolled. Prior permission was obtained before approaching participants for data collection. The study was conducted in an academic environment that ensured participants' comfort, privacy, and confidentiality during the completion of questionnaires.

Measures

Formal written permission from the original sources has been obtained for all measures used in the current study.

Consent Form

A consent form was provided to all participants. The form included the purpose of the study, estimated completion time (20–25 minutes), confidentiality assurance, and participants' right to withdraw at any stage without negative consequences. All ethical guidelines by the APA and the ethical review committee of the Department of Psychology, FUUAST, were strictly followed.

Demographic Form

A demographic information form was provided to all participants. The form included 35 items related to age, gender, socioeconomic status, qualification, semester/year, type of university, family system, and employment status. Additional information regarding type of part-time work, working hours per week, and monthly income was also obtained.

Academic Stress Scale Tool (ASST)

Academic stress was measured using the Academic Stress Scale Tool (ASST), developed by Shafiq Zunaira. The ASST consists of 40 items designed to measure the level of academic-related stress experienced by students. It evaluates various dimensions such as workload, time

pressure, academic expectations, and performance anxiety. Responses are recorded on a Likert-type scale, reflecting the intensity or frequency of stress symptoms. In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient for the ASST was .951.

Oldenburg Burnout Inventory, Student Version (OLBI-S)

Academic burnout was measured using the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory – Student Version (OLBI-S; Demerouti et al., 2003). The OLBI-S is a 16-item self-report scale designed to assess academic burnout among university students. It consists of two dimensions: Exhaustion and Disengagement, with eight items in each subscale. Responses are recorded on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 4 (Strongly Disagree). Negatively worded items are reverse scored before computing total scores, and higher scores indicate higher levels of academic burnout. In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient for the OLBI-S was .708.

Inclusion Criteria

- Participants aged between 18 to 30 years, representing the undergraduate student population most likely to engage in part-time work alongside their studies.
- Both male and female students, to examine possible gender differences in academic burnout and academic stress.
- Undergraduate students currently enrolled in recognized universities, as the study focused specifically on academic burnout within the university context.
- Students who were either engaged in part-time work or not employed, to compare burnout and stress levels between working and non-working students.
- Participants with sufficient educational background to understand and respond to English-language questionnaires.

Exclusion Criteria

- Participants with any physical disabilities that could interfere with their ability to engage in part-time work and affect academic burnout or stress levels.
- Participants with diagnosed mental health disorders, to avoid confounding effects on academic burnout and stress measures.
- Students not currently enrolled in undergraduate programs.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the study, ethical principles and research guidelines were strictly followed in accordance with the standards provided by the American Psychological Association and the Ethical Review Committee of the Department of Psychology, FUUAST. The study was conducted after approval from the supervisor and the concerned department, and permission to use the research instruments was obtained from the respective authors where required. Participants were approached individually after obtaining institutional permission and were informed about the purpose of the study. A written informed consent form was provided prior to administration of the questionnaires. Participation was voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw at any stage without any consequences. No physical or psychological harm, monetary incentive, or pressure was involved. The dignity, privacy, and confidentiality of all participants were maintained, and their identities were not disclosed during data analysis or reporting of findings.

Procedure

Participants were approached from different universities for the purpose of data collection. Prior to data collection, formal permission was obtained from the concerned authorities. Participants were approached individually, and rapport was established to ensure their comfort and willingness to participate. The purpose and objectives of the research were clearly explained. Participants were provided with a written informed consent form (Appendix A) and informed that their participation was completely voluntary, that they could withdraw at any stage without negative consequences, and that their responses would remain confidential and anonymous.

Completing the questionnaires would take approximately 20–25 minutes. Following the consent process, participants completed a demographic information form covering age, gender, academic enrollment status, and part-time work status. They were then administered the Academic Stress Scale Tool and the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory – Student Version. Clear instructions were provided for accurate completion of both instruments. Data collection was conducted in a calm, disturbance-free environment to ensure uniformity and reliability of responses. After completing the questionnaires, participants were thanked for their time and cooperation.

Statistical Analysis

Scoring was conducted according to the respective scale manuals. Descriptive and inferential statistics (independent-samples t-test) were computed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Scores of academic stress and academic burnout were calculated according to the scoring procedures provided in the respective scales.

Operational Definitions

Part-Time Work

Part-time work is operationally defined as paid employment undertaken by full-time students, characterized by working hours that are secondary to academic commitments, and is associated with role conflict when work demands interfere with academic responsibilities (Draghici & Cazan, 2022).

Academic Burnout

Academic burnout is a condition of long-term physical and emotional exhaustion characterized by feelings of disaffection, cynicism, and a reduced sense of interest in academic tasks, caused by prolonged academic demands and stress (Saqib et al., 2025).

Academic Stress

Academic stress refers to the psychological pressure and distress experienced by students when academic demands such as examinations, assignments, workload, and performance expectations exceed their perceived ability to cope effectively. It may result in psychological symptoms such as anxiety and depression, as well as physical symptoms including sleep disturbances, fatigue, and reduced well-being (Pérez-Jorge et al., 2025).

Results

The present chapter reports the findings of the statistical analyses using IBM SPSS.

Table 1 *Demographic Characteristics of the Participants*

Demographic Variable	***f***	**%**
Gender		
Male	118	39.3
Female	179	59.7
Prefer not to say	3	1.0
Age		
14 – 29 (Gen Z)	277	92.3
30 – 45 (Millennials)	20	6.7
Prefer not to say	3	1.0
Socioeconomic Status		
Higher	20	6.7
Middle	264	88.0
Lower	16	5.3
Qualification		
Bachelors	257	85.7
Masters	39	13.0
Others	4	1.3

Institute Type		
Public	198	66.0
Private	102	34.0
Residence		
Karachi	274	91.3
Rural Areas	15	5.0
Other Cities	11	3.7

Note. N = 300.

Employment Characteristics of Working Participants

Variable	***f***	**%**
Job Type		
Online	36	24.0
Onsite	46	30.7
Teaching	48	32.0
Miscellaneous	20	13.3
Working Hours		
10 – 20	56	37.3
21 – 30	57	38.0
30 and above	37	24.7
Income		
0 – 9,000	21	14.0
10,000 – 19,000	32	21.3
20,000 – 29,000	32	21.3
30,000 and above	65	43.3

Note. n = 150.

Table 2 *Cross-Tabulation of Perceived Academic Impact and Burnout by Employment Status*

	Employed		**Unemployed**		**Total**	
Variable and Category	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**	***f***	**%**
Do you feel part-time work affects your studies?						
Yes	80	53.3	95	63.3	175	58.3
No	70	46.7	55	36.7	125	41.7
Do you experience academic burnout?						
Yes	96	64.0	99	66.0	195	65.0
No	54	36.0	51	34.0	105	35.0

Note. N = 300.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Coefficients for the Study Scales

Variable	***N***	***Min***	***Max***	***M***	***SD***	***α***
Academic Stress	300	0	151	59.35	28.52	.951
Academic Burnout	300	27	64	46.36	5.34	.708

Table 4 *Independent Samples t-Test Comparing Academic Stress and Burnout by Employment Status*

	Employed		**Unemployed**					**95% CI**	
Variable	***M***	***SD***	***M***	***SD***	***t***	***df***	***p***	**Lower**	**Upper**
Academic Stress	57.65	27.90	61.05	29.13	-1.04	298	.302	-9.89	3.07

Academic Burnout	46.23	5.26	46.49	5.44	-0.43	298	.666	-1.48	0.95

Note. N = 300, CI = confidence interval

Discussion

The present study aimed to examine differences in academic stress and academic burnout between working (jobian) and non-working (non-jobian) university students. The findings are discussed in relation to the study objectives and previous research. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants. The majority of participants were female (59.7%), while males constituted 39.3% of the sample, and 1.0% preferred not to disclose their gender. Most participants belonged to Generation Z (92.3%), whereas only 6.7% belonged to the millennial age group. Regarding socioeconomic status, the majority of participants belonged to the middle class (88.0%), while 6.7% and 5.3% belonged to higher and lower socioeconomic classes, respectively. Most participants were enrolled in bachelor's degree programs (85.7%), attended public universities (66.0%), and resided in Karachi (91.3%). These findings indicate that the sample largely consisted of young university students from middle socioeconomic backgrounds. Table 2 describes the employment characteristics of working students. Teaching jobs represented the largest category of employment (32.0%), followed by onsite jobs (30.7%), online jobs (24.0%), and miscellaneous jobs (13.3%). Most students worked between 21 and 30 hours per week (38.0%), whereas 37.3% worked between 10 and 20 hours. In terms of income, the largest proportion of students (43.3%) earned PKR 30,000 or above per month. These findings suggest that a considerable number of students actively balance academic responsibilities with employment commitments. The findings presented in Table 3 indicate that 58.3% of participants believed that part-time work affects academic performance, whereas 41.7% believed it does not. Among employed students, 53.3% reported that part-time work affected their studies, while 46.7% reported no effect. Interestingly, among non-working students, 63.3% believed that studies are negatively affected, suggesting that academic difficulties are not limited to working students alone. Regarding academic burnout, 64.0% of employed students and 66.0% of non-employed students reported experiencing burnout, indicating that burnout is highly prevalent among both groups and that the difference between them is minimal. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for academic stress and academic burnout. Academic stress had a mean score of 59.35 (SD = 28.52), with scores ranging from 0 to 151, indicating substantial variation among participants. Academic burnout had a mean score of 46.36 (SD = 5.34), with scores ranging from 27 to 64. The findings suggest that academic stress varied considerably, whereas burnout scores were relatively more consistent. The mean score for academic stress was higher than that of academic burnout, indicating that students experienced stress more prominently. The findings regarding academic stress and burnout are consistent with previous literature. Pascoe et al. (2020) reported that university students commonly experience academic stress due to examinations, workload, academic expectations, and career concerns. Similarly, Salmela-Aro and Upadyaya (2014) found that prolonged academic demands contribute significantly to the development of academic burnout among students. These studies support the present findings that stress and burnout are common experiences within university populations. The primary objective of this study was to determine whether working and non-working students differed significantly in academic stress and academic burnout. Table 5 shows that working students obtained a mean academic stress score of 57.65 (SD = 27.90), whereas non-working students obtained a slightly higher mean score of 61.05 (SD = 29.13). Although non-working students reported higher levels of stress, the difference was small and statistically nonsignificant, $t(298) = -1.04$, $p = .302$. Similarly, working students obtained a mean academic burnout score of 46.23 (SD = 5.26), whereas non-working students obtained a mean score of

46.49 (*SD* = 5.44). The difference was extremely small and statistically nonsignificant, $t(298) = -0.43$, $p = .666$. These findings indicate that both working and non-working students experience nearly similar levels of academic burnout. Therefore, the hypothesis proposing a significant difference in academic stress and academic burnout between working and non-working students was not supported. Although slight differences were observed in the mean scores, these differences were not large enough to reach statistical significance. A possible explanation for these findings is that university students experience numerous stressors regardless of employment status. Academic workload, examinations, assignment deadlines, financial concerns, uncertainty regarding future careers, and personal responsibilities may affect both working and non-working students. Consequently, students who do not work may experience levels of stress and burnout similar to those who have employment responsibilities. This explanation is supported by Robotham (2008), who suggested that student stress is influenced by multiple academic, personal, and environmental factors rather than a single source of pressure. Another possible explanation relates to the Pakistani educational context. Many students face uncertainty regarding career choices and future employment opportunities. In addition, mental health support services remain limited in many educational institutions. As a result, both working and non-working students may experience similar psychological pressures, and employment status alone may not be sufficient to produce meaningful differences in academic stress and burnout. Overall, the findings suggest that academic stress and academic burnout are common concerns among university students irrespective of employment status. The absence of significant differences between working and non-working students highlights the need for universities to provide effective counseling services, mental health support, and stress-management programs for all students.

Conclusion

This study investigated differences in academic stress and burnout between employed and non-employed university students. The findings revealed that both groups experienced comparable levels of academic stress and burnout, and no statistically significant differences were found based on employment status. These results suggest that academic challenges, financial concerns, future career uncertainty, and personal responsibilities affect university students regardless of whether they are employed. The study highlights that academic stress and burnout are widespread concerns among students and underscores the importance of providing accessible counseling services, mental health support, and stress-management interventions to promote students' academic performance and psychological well-being.

Implications of the Study

The results of this research provide educational institutions with information about levels of academic stress and burnout across all types of university students. This data can inform the development of more effective academic policies, flexible schedules, and student-centered learning environments. This study can assist university counseling centers in better identifying students at risk for academic stress and burnout, enabling the development of targeted services such as stress management workshops, counseling programs, and resilience-building activities. University administrators and policymakers can utilize this study to develop policies that support working students, such as flexible class scheduling, online course availability, academic advising, and workload management strategies. The findings will also encourage students to use healthier coping strategies, develop better time management skills, and implement self-care practices. The research contributes to the literature on university student experiences with academic burnout and stress, particularly in contexts where students face both academic and employment obligations.

Limitations

The sample was limited to 300 university students, primarily from Karachi, which restricts the generalizability of findings to other regions and populations. The cross-sectional design prevents causal inferences about the relationship between academic stress and burnout. Self-report data may be subject to social desirability bias and recall errors. The study did not include additional variables that might affect academic stress and burnout, such as social support, coping methods, personality traits, financial difficulties, and mental health status. The binary classification of employment status did not capture nuances such as working hours, job type, or non-academic responsibilities.

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